

Bortner to appear on television talk show

Topic is mothers' accountability for not stopping abuse

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DOVER — A Rochester woman convicted of failing to protect her young daughter from the abuse that claimed her life is taking her story to the jury of public opinion on a national daytime talk show this week.

The John Walsh Show, which is broadcast in communities across the nation on network television, will present an episode entitled "Limits of Responsibility" on Wednesday.

John Walsh is probably best known as the host of the television program "America's Most Wanted: America Fights Back."

His new talk show, which began airing Sept. 9, 2002, can be seen weekday mornings at 9 a.m. on ABC affiliates WMUR-Channel 9 and WCVB-Channel 5 in the Seacoast area.

Wednesday's show will feature an interview with 21-year-old Amanda Bortner, who is serving a two-year sentence at Strafford County House of Corrections after being convicted on two misdemeanor counts of endangering the welfare of a child. The interview was recorded shortly before Bortner was sentenced to jail on Jan. 3.

Bortner's daughter, 21-month-old Cassidy Caitlyn Bortner, was beaten to death in November 2000 and Bortner's live-in boyfriend, 31-year-old Chad E. Evans was convicted of the crime.

Evans is currently serving a sentence of 28 years to life in state prison on his second degree murder and multiple assault convictions.

The focus on Wednesday's show is not on Cassidy and other children who were beaten to death by members of their household, but on the mothers who are being held accountable for not stopping that abuse.

The show will feature a Minnesota woman serving an eight-year prison sentence for failing to protect her 3-year-old son from her boyfriend's abuse.

The child ultimately died from the abuse.

In taped interviews with police prior to their individual arrests, Bortner and Evans both accused each other of mistreating Cassidy — stories they changed by the time his trial began in December 2001.

Evans did not take the stand in his own defense and, almost exactly one year later, Bortner was in the same courtroom facing the two misdemeanor charges pending against her in connection with Cassidy's death.

During her own trial, Bortner also declined to testify, instead telling members of the press outside the courtroom, "the truth will come out."

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